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COORDINATION OF THE POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND OTHER BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING THEME: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AGAINST THE ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SALE, DEMAND, TRAFFIC AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES

Draft agreed conclusions submitted by the Vice-President of the Council, Mr. Enrique Tejerá-Paris (Venezuela)

At its coordination segment, the Council reviewed the coordination of the activities of the United Nations system against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. In addition to the report on the status of international cooperation on drug abuse control within the United Nations system, the Council also had before it for consideration the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control, including agency-specific implementation plans, and a letter of 23 June 1994 from the Chairman of the thirty-seventh session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to the President of the Economic and Social Council.

During the discussion, Member States and representatives of the organizations of the Untied Nations system concerned commented on the current arrangements for coordination and made a number of suggestions for improving coordination within the United Nations system on the subject of drug abuse control.

Representatives of organizations of the United Nations system and international financial institutions concerned also responded to specific questions on coordination relating to the subject of drug abuse control. On the basis of these deliberations, the Council reached the following conclusions:

1. The Council welcomed the report of the Secretary-General and in general supported the conclusions and recommendations contained in it, which should be fully explored by the concerned parties on a priority basis.

2. The Council strongly underlined that the global and multidisciplinary nature of the drug abuse phenomenon must be effectively addressed through a common and properly coordinated international effort and that all necessary steps should be taken to further enhance such coordination, in particular within the United Nations system.

3. The Council reaffirmed that the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) should fully play its catalytic role and continue to provide leadership and coordination within the United Nations system on matters related to drug abuse control. The Council stressed the critical importance of a strengthened process of consultation and coordination between UNDCP and its main partners within the United Nations system, which, as appropriate, should be extended to collaboration with other competent intergovernmental organizations, particularly at the regional level, including the international financial institutions and regional development banks. The need for closer interaction between the UNDCP and the United Nations Crime Prevention Programme was emphasized, and it was recommended that the UNDCP and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch should be provided with the necessary resources to enable them to coordinate their work effectively. It was also recommended that the United Nations organizations concerned with the issue of drug abuse control should sign cooperative agreements with UNDCP, if they had not yet done so, which could become the basis for closer collaboration and more focused interaction among them, with due regard for their respective mandates and specialization.

4. The Council stressed that the System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control (SWAP) was a critical tool for the coordination of drug abuse control matters within the United Nation system and should be taken full advantage of. It nevertheless noted with concern that some agencies and organizations had not yet made contributions to the Action Plan, and recommended that all concerned agencies and organizations should do so as soon as possible. The Council also recognized that an enhanced approach was needed in the process leading to formulation of the System-Wide Action Plan, in order to sharpen its focus and strengthen its effectiveness, establishing a strategy to ensure systematic promotion of the drug issue in the activities of United Nations bodies and programmes and of specialized agencies. SWAP would greatly benefit from a definition of and agreement on shared goals and objectives among the concerned organizations and should reflect the translation of those goals and objectives into concrete operational projects and activities at the field level. The Council urged progress in that endeavour without hindrance to ongoing activities. The Council was of the view that field offices, especially those of United Nations resident representatives as representatives of UNDCP, had a special role to play in the coordination of activities and programmes of assistance formulated by Governments at the country and regional/subregional level.

5. The Council stressed the importance of the ACC Subcommittee on Drug Abuse Control as a critical working tool for coordination among the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and reaffirmed that it should be used to focus on and overcome the difficulties of coordination mentioned during the debate, since it provided an appropriate mechanism to discuss practical modalities of cooperation among United Nations system organizations. The Council was of the view that the 1995 spring session of ACC, which would have coordination in drug control on its agenda, presented an ideal opportunity for progress which should be taken full advantage of. It was therefore of the view that all efforts should be made to ensure that the next meeting of the ACC Subcommittee on Drug Abuse Control be well prepared and effectively conducted towards the adoption of practical understandings and operational decisions. The Council invited ACC to make available to its 1995 session a report on the potential and modalities for increasing joint efforts among the organizations in enhancing drug abuse control.

6. The Council stressed the importance of each country establishing and fully utilizing master plans, since such plans afforded Governments the opportunity of detailing a coherent strategy and its implementation modalities in the fight against illicit drugs, including the role of international organizations therein. While recognizing that the preparation of master plans was the primary responsibility of Governments, the Council was of the view that the concerned United Nations agencies and organizations should be ready, on request, to provide the relevant support and expertise at the field level.

7. The Council stressed that in the context of coordination at the field level, the role of the resident coordinators was very important and suggested that, in consultation with the interested Governments, they should add anti-drug efforts to their main areas of responsibilities and seek to include, as appropriate, drug abuse control issues in IPF (indicative planning figures) country programmes. In addition, the Council also recommended that agencies and organizations of the United Nation system should incorporate, as appropriate, all relevant aspects of drug control activities into their own substantive programmes. The Council welcomed the decision of WHO to establish a division for substance abuse. At the same time, efforts should be made by UNDCP, together with partner agencies and institutions, to identify more focused and precisely defined areas of cooperation. The modality of local informal inter-agency groups was recommended as a practical approach to enhanced coordination.

8. The Council emphasized the importance of further increasing coordination and collaboration in the field of compilation and dissemination of drug-related information and took note of the relevant suggestion by the Secretary-General in his report on the development of a common database, drawing on work already done by UNDCP and other organizations, as envisaged by relevant resolutions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

9. The Council underlined how important it was for all pertinent knowledge on the socio-economic impact of illicit drug production, trafficking and abuse to be taken into account by UNDCP in the discharge of its responsibilities and as a means of assisting the coordination process. That

applied not only to the traditional partners of UNDCP, such as ILO, UNESCO and WHO, but also to international financial institutions.

10. The Council, recognizing that money-laundering and illicit arms trafficking and related terrorist activities were problems of major concern for the international community, called on the competent international and regional institutions to give special attention in their own programmes to combating such illegal activities. The Council called, in particular, on the international financial institutions to give due regard in their programmes and projects to the promotion of sustainable alternative development schemes in areas where illicit cultivation takes place, to the study of the macroeconomic and financial implications of money laundering, and to all relevant developmental aspects of the drug problem.

11. The Council agreed that the illicit narcotics trade was a net drain on the global economy and the socio-political consequences of drug trafficking undermined the development process.

12. The Council suggested that in order to develop programmes that took drug control into account, the United Nations agencies needed to become more aware of the threat posed by illicit drug production, trafficking and abuse at the field level, and give higher priority to addressing those problems.

13. The Council was of the view that greater attention should be paid to the linkages between sustainable development, including alternative development, and drug control activities, in order to advance both concerns. The Council stressed the importance of increasing international awareness of the environmental dangers posed by the drug menace. The Council also recognized the important role that the international financial institutions, UNDCP and other relevant United Nations organizations could play in implementing sustainable alternative development schemes.

14. The Council recognized the responsibilities that fell upon both the United Nations agencies and Member States to address consistently and coherently at the meetings of the governing bodies of United Nations specialized agencies, programmes and funds, and regional commissions all aspects of drug control, in order to ensure that proper consideration be given thereto in their activities. Those organizations and Governments were reminded of the request by the General Assembly that the issue of drug control be included in their agendas with a view to (a) examining how their operational and development activities could better integrate the drug control dimension; (b) assessing the activities undertaken to comply with the System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control; and (c) reporting on how drug control issues were taken into account in the relevant programmes.

15. The Council also called upon the governing bodies of all relevant agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to ensure that adequate financial and human resources would be allocated for the further development and implementation of drug control activities designed in cooperation with UNDCP. The Council stressed the importance of strengthening strategies for comprehensive and integrated programmes in the prevention, reduction and elimination of illicit demand, with particular emphasis on treatment, rehabilitation, information and educational campaigns.

16. The Council encouraged UNDCP to participate fully and effectively in the work of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP), to which it had recently been admitted as an observer.

17. The Council agreed that renewed efforts should be made to avoid overlapping and duplication of activities by organizations of the United Nations system, in order to make the best use of limited resources. At the same time, it invited Member States to support UNDCP with additional financial contributions to enable the Programme to meet increasing demands resulting from the expansion of the drug problem.

18. The Council was also of the opinion that the social impact of illicit drug production, abuse and trafficking should be fully taken into account in the preparations for and deliberations of the forthcoming World Summit on Social Development. It thus welcomed the preparation by UNDCP of the relevant documentation and urged its submission to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit.

19. The Council underlined the importance of coherent and consistent follow-up actions on all the issues brought to light by the present review and expressed the hope that when the issue was considered at a high level at its 1995 session, substantial advances would have been made.

20. The Council urged all agencies and organizations of the Untied Nations system, in collaboration with UNDCP, to intensify their efforts in promoting the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse (1991-2000).